



Doha Film Institute to strengthen scriptwriting skills of local talent with screenwriting workshops

Doha, Qatar; October 19, 2012: The Doha Film Institute (DFI) will host a series of screenwriting workshops including “Goul Gassah – Introduction to Scriptwriting Workshop” and the third round of its pioneering Hezayah Screenwriting Programme. The initiatives are aimed at enabling local screenwriters to develop strong stories and high-quality scripts that potentially translate to powerful film productions in the future. It is also in line with DFI’s commitment to identify, nurture, and promote talents that will further enrich Qatar’s cultural scene and reinforce its position as the cultural and artistic hub of the region.

The two initiatives, rolled out by the Gulf Development Unit (GDU) of DFI’s Film Financing arm, aim to foster and promote a new generation of cinematic story-tellers, by equipping them with basic and advanced skills. Through the screenwriting programmes, GDU endeavours to develop successful screenplays across all genres of films including social, historical, drama, comedy, and science-fiction, among others, lending momentum to DFI’s mandate of strengthening aspiring talent, and laying the foundation for a robust film industry in Qatar.

An open-to-all workshop, “Goul Gassah – Introduction to Scriptwriting Workshop” will cover the fundamentals of developing powerful scripts, under the guidance of international script consultant Christian Routh. Building on the potential participants’ enthusiasm and passion for film, the workshop will select applicants with the basic understanding of filmmaking to further fortify their skills at a professional level.

In addition, the on-going Hezayah workshops will continue to build on the success of the previous two editions with the third round of the programme. The twelve scripts that have been developed since July will now be further fine-tuned in the final session under the direction of Christian Routh and Lebanese writer-director Ziad Doueiri. The best scripts, identified from the workshop to be held from November 8 to 11, will be developed as short and feature film productions in 2013.

Mahdi Ali Ali, Manager of Gulf Development Unit, said: “We place great emphasis on developing powerful stories and scripts, which are critical to driving world-class film productions in Qatar. The workshop, led by international professionals, provides aspiring filmmakers the opportunity to learn the core techniques of developing powerful scripts that can be realised into finished projects with a global appeal. This in turn will help in establishing a stronger film talent pool in Qatar and drive our film industry’s growth.”

Paul Miller, Head of Film Financing, Doha Film Institute, said: “Through the Gulf Development Unit, we are seeking to promote home-grown talent and provide them with the opportunity to create quality films that reflect the talent that is becoming of this region. Strengthening skills is a long-term process that can take years and these workshops set the foundation for training Qatari and regional talent, who bring stories that mirror the country’s authentic cultural experience and identity.”



DFI's Gulf Development Unit aims to host an array of workshops in 2013, exploring the numerous facets of filmmaking – from concept to execution – under the guidance of world-class mentors and industry professionals, further spearheading the growth of Qatar's film industry.

"Goul Gassah – Introduction to Scriptwriting Workshop" and Hezayah are the perfect complement to DFI's annual film event, the Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF) which will be held for eight days from November 17 to 24, 2012. The fourth edition of the Festival will open with Mira Nair's critically-acclaimed *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, in addition to showcasing an internationally diverse programme in distinct themed segments.

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About Doha Film Institute:

Doha Film Institute (DFI) is an independent cultural organisation established in 2010 to incorporate Qatar's film initiatives under one banner; organically supporting the growth of the local film community by enhancing industry knowledge, cultivating film appreciation and contributing to the development of sustainable creative industries in Qatar. DFI's year-round platforms include funding and production of local, regional and international films, educational programmes, film screenings, and the annual Doha Tribeca Film Festival (DTFF).

With culture, community, education and entertainment at its foundation, DFI serves as an all-encompassing film hub in Doha, as well as a resource for the region and the rest of the world. DFI is committed to supporting Qatar's 2030 vision for the development of a knowledge based economy.

DFI has established a number of strategic cultural partnerships with leading local and international organisations including Tribeca Enterprises, World Cinema Foundation, Maisha Film Lab, Katara Cultural Village and Giffoni Film Festival.